LEAN ANGLE
EPISODE 6 - FINALE

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LEAN ANGLE INTERLUDE GIACOMO - MODENA, ITALY

ENTIRE INTERLUDE IN ITALIAN WITH SUBTITLES

BLACK.

SUPER:

MODENA, ITALY

SUMMER, MID-1980s

A pulsing early-80s Italian disco groove. Analog synth. Mechanical rhythm. Warmth. Velocity.

EXT. MODENA STREET - MORNING

Summer light floods narrow streets. Distant church bells. Vespas. Fiats. Open windows. Opera drifts faintly from a radio.

GIACOMO, 16, long hair, impossible confidence, struts down the sidewalk like the entire city belongs to him. Half mechanic. Half rock star. Half idiot. A cigarette already behind one ear.

A WOMAN leans out from a balcony above.

WOMAN
Giacomo!

He looks up instantly. Big grin.

GIACOMO
Ciao, Mamma!

She shakes her head — already defeated by him.

He reaches his small two-stroke dirt bike parked outside the building. Kicks it alive. BRAAAPPPP. Perfect sound.

Giacomo smiles wider.

GIACOMO
Today is going to be a great day.

MONTAGE

Giacomo wheelies through the narrow Modena streets.

— Laughing with bakery girls outside a café.

— Sliding his bike sideways past old men arguing football.

— Cigarette now lit.

— Red wine in a plastic cup by noon.

— Racing Vespas through traffic.

— Opera and disco bleeding from open windows simultaneously.

— Giacomo riding one-handed through pure summer chaos.

Joyful. Fast. Alive. A cigarette in one hand. A plastic cup of red wine in the other. A wheelie too long for the street.

A WOMAN yells from a balcony.

WOMAN
You'll die before dinner!

GIACOMO
Then save me pizza!

He disappears around the corner.

CUT TO:

EXT. BIKE SHOP - MODENA - CONTINUOUS

A cramped motorcycle shop. Posters of racers. Oil stains. Pizza boxes. Wine bottles. Engines half-open on benches.

MECHANIC 1 works on a 250cc two-stroke race bike. MECHANIC 2 smokes beside him, doing less. CUSTOMER 1 watches too closely.

CUSTOMER 1
It sounded fine yesterday.

MECHANIC 1
Yesterday is dead.

Giacomo slides the dirt bike sideways into the shop entrance. Too fast. Perfect stop.

MECHANIC 2
You're late.

GIACOMO
I arrived beautifully.

MECHANIC 1
Beauty doesn’t fix engines.

GIACOMO
No. I do.

Laughter. Giacomo drops the cigarette into Mechanic 2’s mouth as he passes. Without looking.

INT. BIKE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Noise everywhere. Radio playing opera. A pot of sauce bubbling on a hot plate. Someone opens wine with a screwdriver. A CUSTOMER’S scooter coughs and dies.

CUSTOMER 1
See?

Giacomo listens. Not like Erv. Not still. He listens while moving. Grabs a wrench. Adjusts. Kicks. The scooter comes alive.

CUSTOMER 1
What was it?

GIACOMO
You touched things you don’t understand.

CUSTOMER 1
I only cleaned it.

MECHANIC 1
Exactly.

Everyone laughs. The radio shifts. Puccini. Giacomo freezes. Just slightly. From the radio:

LA BOHÈME.

Not loud. But enough.

MECHANIC 2 smiles.

MECHANIC 2
Nina and Nino again.

MECHANIC 1
She made him sing properly.

MECHANIC 2
She made everyone better.

A beat.

GIACOMO
Tonight.

MECHANIC 1
You can’t afford tonight.

GIACOMO
I can never afford anything.

MECHANIC 2
That is true.

A horn outside. Sharp. Elegant. Familiar. Everyone turns.

EXT. BIKE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

A beautiful dark car sits outside. Not new. But maintained like a jewel. A DRIVER stands beside it, frustrated.

A WOMAN’S LAUGH from inside the car. Warm. Earthy. Effortless. The shop goes quiet instantly. Even before the MAN speaks.

MAN’S VOICE
Is it serious?

Everyone recognizes both voices. Mechanic 1 wipes his hands immediately. Mechanic 2 kills his cigarette. Even the customers stand straighter.

Giacomo looks at the car. Recognition. Not celebrity. Religion.

MECHANIC 1
Go.

GIACOMO
Me?

MECHANIC 1
You have clean hands.

Giacomo looks down. His hands are black with grease.

MECHANIC 1
Clean enough.

EXT. STREET / CAR - CONTINUOUS

Giacomo approaches. Inside the car: We never clearly see them. Only fragments. A silk scarf. A woman’s hand adjusting gloves. A broad silhouette laughing softly beside her.

NINA. MIRELLA FREGNI, FRENI.

NINO. LUCIANO PAVAROTTI.

Gods from another room. The Driver opens the hood. Giacomo looks inside. Battery cable loose. Simple. Almost embarrassing. He tightens it by hand. The engine turns. Nothing. He adjusts again.

This time: perfect. The engine catches smoothly. Nino laughs.

NINO
Bravo.

But it’s Nina who leans slightly forward. We still never fully see her. Only warmth.

NINA
What is your name?

Giacomo almost forgets.

GIACOMO
Giacomo.

NINA
You’re sixteen going on forty.

The men in the shop laugh softly behind him. Nina smiles.

NINA
Modena raises boys too fast.

Giacomo cannot speak.

NINA
Thank you, Giacomo.

That’s it. The car pulls away. They barely noticed him. In the nicest way. Enough to ruin his life.

Mechanic 2 appears beside him.

MECHANIC 2
You fixed Nina and Nino’s car.

GIACOMO
No.

A beat.

GIACOMO
Gods have drivers.

Mechanic 2 laughs. Giacomo watches the car disappear. Church bells. Two-strokes. Opera from the radio. He smiles.

EXT. MODENA OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT

Light spills across the piazza. Crowds in suits and cigarettes gather beneath a glowing marquee:

PUCCINI LA BOHÈME

NINA FRENI NINO PAVAROTTI

Giacomo kills the engine across the street. Just watches it for a moment.

Not celebrity. Pilgrimage.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT

La Bohème.

Giacomo sneaks in through a side door. Knows the route. Past ropes. Past ushers. Past rules.

He slips into the back. Standing room. The house glows.

On stage: Young lovers. Sung by legends old enough to know better. It does not matter. The audience believes.

But Giacomo watches Nina most closely. Not the voice. The control. The stillness. The timing. How effortlessly she guides the room around her. Nino follows her rhythm instinctively.

Giacomo sees: breath, light, silence, timing, release.

Not romance. System.

Performance only looks like magic from the seats.

BACKSTAGE -
LATER

Chaos. Flowers. Sweat. Cigarettes. Champagne. Arguments. Applause still echoing in the walls.

Giacomo slips through unseen. A stagehand clocks him.

STAGEHAND
You again.

GIACOMO
I’m no one.

STAGEHAND
Then carry these.

He hands Giacomo flowers. Giacomo carries them. Happy to be useful.

A door opens. Nino’s laugh floods the corridor. But it’s Nina’s calm voice that settles the room instantly.

We never fully see them. Only: light, movement, perfume, myth.

Giacomo stops outside the room. Listening. Not worshipping now. Studying. The machinery behind beauty.

EXT. MODENA STREET - LATE NIGHT

The opera house empties. Couples. Cigarettes. Perfume. Old men arguing about the second act.

Giacomo exits through the side alley. Mechanic 1 waits on a scooter.

MECHANIC 1
Well?

GIACOMO
She made everyone believe.

MECHANIC 1
Again?

GIACOMO
Every night.

Mechanic 1 hands him a slice of cold pizza. Giacomo takes it. A cup of red wine appears from nowhere.

Mechanic 2 pulls up beside them.

MECHANIC 2
Race to the bridge?

GIACOMO
You'll lose.

MECHANIC 2
You always say that.

GIACOMO
You always prove me right.

They launch.

EXT. MODENA STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Scooters and dirt bikes tear through narrow streets. Laughter. Engines. Opera leaking from open windows.

Giacomo rides one-handed. Pizza in his mouth. Cigarette between fingers. Red wine in a plastic cup.

He pulls a wheelie into the night. Not reckless. Joyful.

A boy in a town where engines and opera are the same religion. For a moment — everything works.

FADE OUT.

TEASER: 6 WEEKS LATER

BLACK.

Silence. Then — sound fragments, overlapping, out of order.

SPENCER (V.O.)
The European swing — and everything's tightening.

CUT TO:

A FLASH of a RESULTS GRAPHIC — gone before we can read it.

CUT TO:

A HEADLINE

(ITALIAN):

DUCATI DOMINANCE CRACKING?

CUT TO:

A HEADLINE

(FRENCH):

FABIO SURGES AT HOME

CUT TO:

A HEADLINE

(CATALAN):

XAVI CLIMBS — TOO LATE?

CUT TO:

A NEWS CLIP — QUICK, IMPRECISE

SPENCER (V.O.)
And off track — Ducati's other story continues.

A FLASH — MICK STONER on screen. Interview setting. Controlled.

SPENCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Five-time MotoGP champion. Still sidelined.

MICK (V.O.)
Ahead of schedule.

CUT BEFORE WE

SETTLE ON HIM.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE — THE LAST SIX WEEKS (IMPLIED, NOT SHOWN)

We never see races. We see consequences.

— A mechanic zips a suit harder than necessary.

— A wrist being taped — again.

— A helmet dropped on a table, not gently.

— Penelope watching a screen, then turning away.

— Erv listening to engine audio through headphones, eyes closed.

— Diego's name sliding down a points board.

— Fabio's name sliding up.

— Xavi's name climbing — but still behind.

SPENCER (V.O.)
Diego Alonso came in with a lead. He barely has one now.

CUT TO:

A blurred POINTS STANDING — only shapes, not numbers.

SPENCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Fabio is flying. The crowd's behind him. The paddock's behind him.

CUT TO:

Fabio smiling for cameras — then turning serious the moment they stop.

CUT TO:

Xavi alone, helmet on, visor down — breathing.

SPENCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And Xavi Vega — who missed the first two races… and DNF Austin…still climbing.

CUT TO:

A NEWS ALERT:

MUGELLO: TITLE FIGHT TIGHTENS

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - DAY

Controlled chaos. Mechanics moving with precision. Tires. Warmers. Quiet urgency.

Xavi sits on the bike, eyes forward. Focused. Erv beside him, adjusting, watching. Penelope stands off to the side. Not in the way. Not outside it either.

A TV hangs in the corner, volume low. The same broadcast continues.

SPENCER (ON TV)
We're joined by five-time MotoGP champion, currently sidelined with injury — Mick Stoner.

Cut to MICK. Early 30s, Australian. Calm. Composed.

SPENCER (ON TV)
Mick, how's the recovery?

MICK (ON TV)
Ahead of schedule.

A beat. Not a boast. Just information.

No one reacts immediately. But everyone heard it. Xavi doesn't look at the screen. Erv does. Once. That's enough. Penelope watches Xavi. Not the TV. Measuring.

SPENCER (ON TV)
We might see you back sooner than expected?

MICK (ON TV)
That's the plan.

Penelope steps over. Clicks the TV off. Silence. The garage doesn't change. But the air does.

ERV
(quiet, to Xavi)
Not today.

Xavi nods. Already somewhere else.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. FLORENCE - EARLY MORNING

Not postcard Florence. Working Florence.

A barista sets cups outside a café. A woman opens shutters. Laundry flaps between buildings. The city breathes.

CUT TO:

EXT. TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING - MOVING

A car cuts through fog and cypress trees. The road unwinds.

The sound changes. Wind. Space. Distance.

SPENCER (V.O.)
This is where seasons turn. This is Mugello.

CUT TO:

EXT. MUGELLO CIRCUIT - MORNING

Empty grandstands. Cold asphalt. Painted curbs wet with dew.

A MAINTENANCE WORKER sweeps pit lane. The broom echoes too loud. This place isn't awake yet. But it's waiting. A bike fires once somewhere in the paddock — not loud, not close. A test. Silence.

TITLE CARD: LEAN ANGLE

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - MORNING

Lights flick on in sequence. Screens glow — we never see them. Only faces reflecting data and light.

Erv stands alone, listening like a mechanic listens to an engine.

A bike passes outside — DOPPLER scream, clean, precise. The pitch changes mid-corner.

Erv's eyes narrow. He clocks it.

EXT. PADDOCK WALKWAY - MORNING

Penelope moves fast, headset around her neck, phone already buzzing. She finds XAVI and ERV walking.

PENELOPE
Italy is officially in "people watching you watch them" territory.

XAVI
I preferred when nobody knew me.

PENELOPE
You had that. For like a minute.

Erv doesn’t smile. He’s listening past them.

ERV
Mugello doesn’t forgive.

Xavi clocks the tone shift.

XAVI
What does it punish?

ERV
Impatience.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRACK - PRACTICE (IMPLIED)

Fragments only:

— LOW ANGLE at a curb as bikes rip past — BOOTS on pegs, micro-adjustments — TIRE EDGE shimmering with heat

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Xavi sits on the bike, visor down. Breathing steady.

IN-AUDIO drops us inside.

XAVI (V.O.)
Okay. Okay. Don’t force it.

A glance at the dash.

XAVI (V.O.) (CONT’D)
Listen.

A bike passes outside — the note shifts slightly. Erv tilts his head.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
Front’s talking. Don’t argue with it. Let it come.

XAVI (V.O.)
Copy.

EXT. DIEGO’S GARAGE - SAME

DIEGO sits with gloves on, visor up. SETE stands behind him, calm as stone.

A bike screams past — close. Diego smiles without humor.

DIEGO
That's him.

SETE
It's early.

DIEGO
It's not.

CUT TO:

INT. PADDOCK CORRIDOR - LATER

Alyssa appears in front of Penelope like she planned it.

ALYSSA
Penelope.

PENELOPE
Alyssa.

Professional smiles. No warmth.

ALYSSA
Visibility is accelerating.

PENELOPE
That's what happens when someone's good.

ALYSSA
And when someone's useful.

Penelope's smile tightens.

PENELOPE
Say what you mean.

ALYSSA
You don't work for Ducati.

PENELOPE
No.

ALYSSA
Then learn the difference between access and influence.

Penelope's phone buzzes — a text from Xavi: "Where are you?"

PENELOPE
I’m learning fast.

She steps around Alyssa and walks away. Alyssa watches, recalculating.

CUT TO:

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - LATER

Xavi rolls in. Helmet off. Sweat. Calm. An engineer starts to speak.

ENGINEER
That lap—

XAVI
(interrupting)
It wasn’t the lap.

Erv looks at him.

ERV
What was it?

XAVI
The wait.

Erv nods once.

EXT. MUGELLO - AFTERNOON

We never see a session begin. We hear it. A bike tears past — doppler scream, then gone. Silence again. The track breathes in pulses.

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Faces turn as bikes pass. No one speaks. They’re listening for changes, not speed. An engineer stiffens.

ENGINEER
(quiet)
That’s new.

Erv doesn’t look up.

ERV
He adjusted.

Xavi sits on the bike again, visor down, still. The world shrinks.

IN-HELMET AUDIO:

XAVI (V.O.)
Don’t chase. Let it come.

A bike passes — closer now. The sound is heavier.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
Rear’s starting to move. Let it breathe.

XAVI (V.O.)
Copy.

EXT. PADDOCK WALKWAY - SAME

Penelope stands near pit wall, phone dark in her hand. She doesn’t look at it.

Across the paddock, Diego’s garage: Sete still. Diego pacing once, stopping himself.

Everyone feels it. No one names it.

EXT. TRACK - LATE AFTERNOON

A bike goes by slower now. Measured. Erv closes his eyes for half a beat.

ERV
He found it.

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - LATER

Xavi rolls in. Helmet off. Sweat. Calm. Control.

ENGINEER
That lap was—

XAVI
(interrupting)
It wasn’t the lap.

Erv studies him.

ERV
What was it?

XAVI
The wait.

Erv nods. That’s the right answer.

EXT. PADDOCK - NIGHT

The paddock is a different world. Transporters closed. Generators humming low. Shadows where people used to be.

GIACOMO stands alone, smoking, a glass of red wine in his hand. Relaxed. Disarming. Almost kind.

Xavi rounds the corner, slows.

GIACOMO
Xavi Vega.

XAVI
Sir.

Giacomo smiles.

GIACOMO
Sir? Suddenly so respectful.

Xavi nods.

XAVI
I haven’t thanked you.

GIACOMO
For?

XAVI
The opportunity. Thank you.

Giacomo stamps out his cigarette.

GIACOMO
I appreciate that. But honestly… I should thank you.

XAVI
Me?

GIACOMO
Uprooting your life. Joining this fucking circus.

They share a small laugh.

GIACOMO (CONT'D)
New lands. New people. Especially as an American. Not always popular here.

XAVI
I know.

GIACOMO
But you struck a chord. They love you, man.

XAVI
I'm trying my best.

GIACOMO
(smiles)
Penelope's a pistol.

XAVI
Yeah. To say the least.

A beat. Giacomo sips his wine.

GIACOMO
One more race. Then summer break.

XAVI
Any advice?

Giacomo considers.

GIACOMO
Ride fast. And keep Fabio behind you.

Xavi nods.

Giacomo turns to go, then stops.

GIACOMO (CONT'D)
Your father would have been proud.

Xavi freezes.

XAVI
You knew him?

Giacomo turns back. Softer.

GIACOMO
I did. Your mother too.

XAVI
What was he like?

GIACOMO
Fast. Like you.
(beat)
And a little crazy. Your mother —
one of one.

XAVI
I know.

Giacomo nods, regret flashing.

GIACOMO
I've been too hard on you. On the
team.

XAVI
We've been hard on you too.

Giacomo laughs.

GIACOMO
True. Fucking Erv.

XAVI
He's a good guy.

GIACOMO
Great guy. He looks after you.
Cherish that.

XAVI
I will.

Giacomo strolls off, humming — then singing Puccini- Nessun Dorma. And he's a good tenor.

XAVI
Puccini.

Giacomo stops, surprised.

GIACOMO
Xavi Vega. Full of surprises.

XAVI
Is it Turan-do? Or Turan-dot?

Giacomo laughs as he walks away.

GIACOMO
However the fucking conductor tells you to say it.

Xavi stands alone, listening as the aria echoes through the empty paddock.

CUT TO:

EXT. MUGELLO HILLSIDE CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The other Mugello.

Campfires glow like stars. Music thumps, distorted, alive. Chainsaws rev in the distance, then laughter. Smoke, food, bodies moving without rules.

Xavi and Penelope emerge from the trees. The sound hits them like a wave.

XAVI
What is this?

PENELOPE
Mugello. The real one.

They walk into it. Fans recognize him — not screaming. Smiling. Open.

A beer is pressed into his hand. Someone pulls him into a dance circle. He resists — then laughs and gives in.

Penelope watches him disappear into joy. Relief floods her face. She joins him.

For a moment, he’s not a rider. Not a symbol. Just a guy in the dark with music.

Xavi leans close, shouting over the sound.

XAVI
You planned this.

PENELOPE
I planned you not thinking.

He laughs. Real. Xavi looks up at the hills — fires glowing, music echoing, chainsaws screaming like animals.

XAVI
This place is insane.

PENELOPE
It’s free.

Xavi nods. For the first time all weekend, he believes her. They disappear into the crowd.

EXT. MUGELLO - MORNING

Qualifying day. The track is already loud with expectation. Not engines — people.

Mechanics move faster. Engineers talk less. No one lingers.

Whatever is going to happen is already decided. They just don’t know how yet.

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - PRE-QUALIFYING

Xavi sits on the bike, visor down. Hands steady. Breathing slow.

IN-HELMET AUDIO:

XAVI (V.O.)
Same thing. Same rules. Wait.

Erv crouches beside him, low voice into the mic.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
Track’s coming to you. Don’t go looking for it.

XAVI (V.O.)
Copy.

A beat. Then—

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
And Xavi?

Xavi waits.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO) (CONT’D)
Whatever happens… stay you.

Xavi nods, unseen.

EXT. TRACK - QUALIFYING (IMPLIED)

We never see a lap. We hear fragments:

— A bike screams past closer than before — A sudden lift in pitch — Silence too long — Then another bike, angrier, nearer

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Timing screens glow off faces. We never see numbers.

An engineer sits down without realizing it.

ENGINEER
(quiet)
That’s him.

Erv doesn’t react. He’s listening to something else.

ERV
(quiet)
Wait.

The sound returns. Different now. Confident.

ERV (CONT’D)
He’s in.

No celebration. No relief. Just forward motion.

EXT. PADDOCK WALKWAY - LATER

Xavi walks, helmet under arm. Sweat still on his neck. Penelope joins him.

PENELOPE
You look like you didn’t enjoy that.

XAVI
I did.

She waits.

XAVI (CONT’D)
I just don’t trust it yet.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tuscan stone. Warm light. A table that feels wrong before anyone sits.

Giacomo takes the head, like it’s assigned. Alyssa beside him — observing, not eating.

Xavi sits opposite. Penelope next to him. Erv close enough to intervene. Diego and Sete form a quiet axis at the far end.

Wine is poured. No one drinks. Giacomo is softer, not a control vibe.

GIACOMO
To Mugello. To a weekend that matters.

No one echoes. He drinks anyway.

GIACOMO
Mugello, first race 1914. Top speed in MotoGP history just a few years ago, 225.9 miles per hour. To our friends at Ferrari for taking such good care of Mugello. Visibility is accelerating.

Xavi looks up, calm.

XAVI
Is that good?

Giacomo smiles — mentorship mode.

GIACOMO
It’s useful. But usefulness has conditions.

Penelope stiffens. Erv clocks it.

GIACOMO
Alignment matters. Especially when a rider becomes larger than the team.

Xavi sets his fork down. Soft. The sound lands louder than it should.

XAVI
When I crashed in Le Mans, you blamed me.

Silence.

Giacomo doesn’t love this.

GIACOMO
I reacted.

XAVI
Yeah.
(beat)
What happens when you react publicly?

Alyssa shifts — too late to stop it.

GIACOMO
We handle narrative.

PENELOPE
That’s a terrifying sentence.

Alyssa snaps a look at her. Warning.

GIACOMO
You worry about riding. Leave narrative to us.

Xavi nods. Calm.

XAVI
I am.

Giacomo leans in — control now naked.

GIACOMO
Then remember who gives you the bike.

Erv finally speaks, voice low and final.

ERV
He remembers who gives him the risk.

That lands. Diego watches, unreadable. Sete watches Giacomo — and sees fear. Giacomo stands.

GIACOMO
We’re done.

He leaves. Alyssa follows, already recalculating. The table exhales like survivors.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

They step outside into cool air. Penelope looks at Xavi.

PENELOPE
You okay?

Xavi nods.

XAVI
Now I am.

He looks back toward the hills.

XAVI (CONT'D)
Tomorrow's going to be quiet.

Penelope doesn't believe him. That's okay.

EXT. MUGELLO CIRCUIT - SUNDAY MORNING

Dawn. The paddock is awake in a different way now. Quieter. Sharper. Ritualistic.

Mechanics walk with purpose. No wasted steps. No jokes.

Xavi stretches alone near the garage. Slow. Methodical.

IN-HELMET AUDIO (memory echoing, not wearing it yet):
Breathing. Heartbeat. Stillness.

XAVI (V.O.)
Same rules. Same breath.

EXT. MUGELLO - FAN PARADE - MORNING

A FLATBED TRAILER crawls the circuit. Riders wave. Smile. Perform. Fans ten deep, flags everywhere. Smoke drifting. Chants rolling across the valley.

Xavi stands on the trailer. The noise hits him like pressure.

XAVI (V.O.)
Okay. Just people.

The trailer stops at a fan club stand. A microphone appears.

ANNOUNCER (ITALIAN, SUBTITLED)
Xavi Vega!

The crowd erupts. A young fan leans over the rail.

YOUNG FAN
Win for us!

Xavi smiles — then checks himself.

XAVI
I'll try not to lose.

Laughter. Love. The trailer rolls again.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO) — unexpectedly intimate Don’t let them ride it for you.

Xavi nods slightly.

XAVI (V.O.)
Copy.

He looks down at the asphalt passing beneath his feet. The same surface that will try to kill him in hours.

EXT. GRID - LATER

We never see bikes line up. We hear engines settle into place. One by one. Then all at once.

Xavi sits on the bike. Helmet on. World narrowed.

IN-HELMET AUDIO drops us inside.

XAVI (V.O.)
Wait. Wait. Now listen.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
Diego’s clear. You’re P2. Protect it.

XAVI (V.O.)
Copy.

The lights go out — but we don’t see them. We hear the world tear apart.

EXT. PIT WALL - RACE

DOPPLER screams hit and vanish. The rhythm sets.

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

No one looks at screens. Everyone listens.

A bike passes — strong. Then another — weaker. Then one trapped behind the first. Erv tilts his head.

ERV
Diego’s leading.

EXT. PADDOCK CORRIDOR - SAME

Penelope stands with her back to the wall. Hands clenched. Not looking. Listening.

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - LAPS LATER

The rhythm changes. The scream behind Xavi grows closer. Angrier.

An engineer leans in.

ENGINEER
Rear's going.

Erv doesn't look at him.

ERV
He knows.

IN-HELMET AUDIO: The bike moves beneath Xavi. Sliding. Alive. On the edge.

XAVI (V.O.)
Okay. Okay. Let it move.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
Brake late. Close the door. Make it ugly.

XAVI (V.O.)
Copy.

EXT. TRACK - FRAGMENTS

— A knee hovering, never touching — A rear tire stepping out under braking — Fabio's front wheel appearing, disappearing — Crowd sound rising, falling — A bike screaming trapped behind another scream

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - FINAL LAPS

The sound changes. The bike behind Xavi is closer now. Too close. The pitch sharper. Hungrier. Everyone hears it.

ENGINEER
(whisper)
Fabio's there.

Erv doesn't look up. He closes his eyes for half a beat — listening deeper.

IN-HELMET AUDIO: The rear tire steps out. Front is light. Every move exaggerated now.

XAVI (V.O.)
Okay.

Okay. Easy. Fabio's engine note flares behind him — then cuts. Then flares again.

XAVI (V.O.)
He wants inside. Don't give him inside.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
He's going to show you the nose. Let him. You own the exit.

Xavi breathes once. Hard.

XAVI (V.O.)
Flat track it. Just like dirt. Just like home.

EXT. TRACK - FRAGMENTS

— Rear tire sliding under braking — Xavi braking impossibly late — Fabio's wheel appearing, disappearing — Xavi standing the bike up early, killing the line — No room. Anywhere.

IN-HELMET AUDIO: The bike rattles. Protests. Begs for mercy.

XAVI (V.O.)
Not today. Not here.

ERV (V.O. / RADIO)
Flat track that fucker, Xavi. Bring it home.

Xavi smiles inside the helmet. Just for a second.

XAVI (V.O.)
Copy.

The bike slides again — violent, controlled. Ugly. Perfect. The scream behind him fades. Not gone. But beaten.

INT. DUCATI GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

No one breathes. Then the sound passes camera position — clean. Unchallenged. Silence stretches.

Then the final pass. Different tone. Finished.

ERV
That’s it.

EXT. PARC FERMÉ - MOMENTS LATER

Diego pulls in first. Helmet still on. He looks around — searching.

Xavi rolls in behind him. Second. Barely holding it together.

Diego crosses immediately and grabs him. A full, unguarded hug. Sete arrives a step later.

Three men — breathing hard, holding on.

Helmets come off. For a moment none of them speak. Sete watches them — quiet, proud. Diego finally exhales.

DIEGO
(quiet, into Xavi’s ear)
Gràcies, tio.

Xavi nods. Doesn’t speak.

Sete places a hand briefly on Diego’s shoulder. The same gesture from weeks earlier in Barcelona.

Diego glances at him. Sete gives the smallest nod. Diego turns back to Xavi.

Now it’s clear. They understand each other.

Penelope watches from the edge. Eyes full. No phone.

Xavi unzips his leathers slightly, reaching inside — instinct, not ceremony.

A small, worn photo slips into view for a second:

Five-year-old Xavi on a dirt bike. His mother beside him.

He looks at it. Just a beat. Then folds it back into the leathers.

Erv catches the glimpse. A smile he can’t hide.

He pulls Xavi into a quick hug.

No cameras. No posing. Just the moment. Fabio rolls in. Third. Engine cuts hard. Helmet off. Breathing heavy. Still wired.

He watches Xavi — shakes his head, half laughing in disbelief. Steps in.

FABIO
Bro… what was that?

Xavi exhales. Small grin.

XAVI
Had to.

FABIO
You were sideways the whole last lap. Haven't seen that since McCoy.

Xavi clocks that — impressed he knows.

XAVI
You were fast as hell.

Fabio nods. No modesty.

FABIO
I know.

A beat. Mutual understanding.

FABIO
That was crazy.

XAVI
Yeah.

They hold eye contact — fighters who just went to war. Fabio extends a fist. Xavi taps it.

FABIO
Summer break.

XAVI
Yeah.

FABIO
I read about you. Surf. Skate. Cook.

XAVI
Sounds about right.

FABIO
You should come to Lyon. Gastronomic genius.

XAVI
I might just do that someday.

Fabio steps back. Lets the Ducati moment stay theirs. Giacomo approaches — first to Diego. A quick embrace.

Then to Xavi. A long look. A wide smile.

He sings a playful few bars of Puccini. Pulls Xavi into a hug.

Xavi stands there — exhausted, upright. Part of it now.

Noise begins swelling around them.

From the edge of the chaos, Alyssa steps in. Not rushing. Not emotional. Just present.

She clocks everything: Xavi. Diego. Giacomo. Cameras starting to push. Sponsor boards lighting.

She gives them exactly one more second.

Then —

ALYSSA
(low, calm)
Two minutes. Then podium.

No one argues. She steps beside Xavi.

ALYSSA
Summer starts now.

Don’t say anything you can’t live with for three weeks.

Xavi nods. Small. He understands. Alyssa turns to PR.

ALYSSA
Italian first. Then English. No championship talk.

PR nods. Giacomo watches Alyssa — approving. He knows she’s running this phase.

Alyssa glances once more at Xavi.

ALYSSA
(quiet)
Breathe. Then smile.

She steps out of frame. Cameras surge in.

EXT. MUGELLO PADDOCK - LATE AFTERNOON

Xavi sits on a crate, helmet beside him. His hands shake now that the adrenaline has left.

Penelope stands in front of him, trying not to show relief.

PENELOPE
You scared me.

XAVI
I know.

She nods. That’s enough. Erv approaches, hands Xavi a water. Not a coach now. Something else.

ERV
That was grown.

XAVI
It hurt.

ERV
Good.

A beat. Respect.

EXT. PADDOCK WALKWAY - CONTINUOUS

Diego and Sete approach. Diego’s helmet under his arm. Sweat in his hair. Human again.

He stops in front of Xavi.

DIEGO
You saved my championship today.

Xavi shrugs, uncomfortable.

XAVI
You were fast.

DIEGO
You were smarter.

Sete steps forward — old racer eyes, clear.

SETE
That was beautiful.

Xavi swallows. That lands harder than applause.

EXT. MEDICAL TENT - LATER

Xavi sits while a DOCTOR checks his wrist. Tape, ice, routine.

Penelope watches from the doorway. For the first time all weekend, she breathes.

EXT. PADDOCK - DUSK

Press hover at a distance. Alyssa stands with them — watching, not entering.

Giacomo watches from across the paddock. No wine now. No smile. Just calculation.

He catches Xavi's eye for a moment. Then looks away. Beat. Spencer approaches Giacomo, who's watching the paddock empty.

SPENCER
Summer break. Where are you headed?

GIACOMO
Sardegna. No motorcycles!

SPENCER
I'll believe that when I see it.

GIACOMO
Well, scooters of course.

Spencer laughs.

GIACOMO
And you?

SPENCER
Home. Absolutely nothing planned.

GIACOMO
Ah! The perfect holiday!

They laugh. Spencer moves on.

INT. MOTORHOME - NIGHT

Quiet. Xavi sits at the small table, eating slowly. Penelope across from him.

PENELOPE
Summer break.

XAVI
Almost.

A beat.

PENELOPE
You did something today. Not just on the bike.

XAVI
I know.

A beat.

Xavi finishes, wipes his hands. Stands.

Penelope watches him — something settled now.

EXT. MUGELLO PADDOCK - DUSK

They step out.

The circuit is emptying out. Transporters closing. Generators winding down. The violence is gone. Only tired people remain.

Erv leans against the transporter. Quiet. Waiting.

Xavi approaches. No buildup.

XAVI
We’re going to Bilbao.

Erv doesn’t react.

PENELOPE
Few days. No schedule. No one knows where we are.

XAVI
You should come.

Erv shakes his head once.

ERV
No.

Xavi looks at him.

XAVI
No?

ERV
You don’t bring a mechanic on vacation.

PENELOPE
You’re not a mechanic.

ERV
I am when it matters.

A beat.

PENELOPE
Bilbao’s different. Basque Country. Euskera. No one understands anything.

Erv looks at her.

ERV
How many languages is that now?

PENELOPE
Enough.

A flicker of a smile.

ERV
San Sebastián.

Xavi clocks it.

XAVI
Yeah?

ERV
Jazzaldia.

Penelope smiles.

PENELOPE
Of course.

ERV
Few people I know are playing.
(beat)
Might sit in.

PENELOPE
I speak Euskera.
(beat, light)
Could be useful.

Erv looks at her. A beat.

ERV
I'll survive. Music is the intergalactic language.

XAVI
You're holding out on us.

ERV
I'm protecting you.

PENELOPE
From what?

ERV
Bad music.

She laughs.

PENELOPE
We'll come.

Erv looks at her. Not dismissive. Just certain.

ERV
No you won't.

A beat.

Then — softer:

ERV
Maybe for a night.

That lands. Penelope is already on her phone.

PENELOPE
Oh yeah, we're going — Kinga Glyk is playing.

ERV
You don't say.

Penelope clocks him.

PENELOPE
Wait, you're not—

ERV
No comment.
(lose the punch — let it sit)
Xavi picks up his helmet.

XAVI
Bilbao first.

PENELOPE
Then San Sebastián.

XAVI
Then… we'll see.

Erv nods once. That's the right answer.

A beat.

ERV
You good?

Xavi nods.

XAVI
Yeah.

Erv looks at him. Small smile.

ERV
Bro… six weeks ago we were racing in the States and working fifty hours a week at a Ducati dealership.

A beat.

ERV
Now we're in MotoGP.

Xavi smiles. Shakes his head slightly.

ERV
Shit, even if this all goes sideways someday…

A beat.

ERV
That's still one hell of a story.

They don't hug. Don't linger. Just three people who know where the others are going.

Different directions. Same map. Xavi and Penelope walk off together.

Erv watches them go. Then turns the opposite way. Already listening again.

ANGLE ON:

Kevin Schwantz and Jorge Lorenzo.

Sitting on the tailgate of an old Ford pickup. A small portable grill going between them. Something wrapped in foil. Smoke drifting upward. Two beers already open.

Watching the kids disappear into the distance.

A beat.

KEVIN
Kid’s got the good kind of problem now.

JORGE
Expectations.

KEVIN
Yeah.

A beat.

JORGE
They stop cheering for potential.

KEVIN
And start expecting results.

JORGE
That is when it gets lonely.

Kevin watches Xavi disappear.

KEVIN
He’ll be alright.

JORGE
Maybe.

A beat.

JORGE
He still listens.

Kevin nods.

KEVIN
That’s the whole game.

A tiny TWO-STROKE ENGINE approaches somewhere off-screen. High-pitched. Reckless. Familiar.

Kevin immediately smiles.

KEVIN
Oh no.

Out of the dusk, a battered old smoker rolls slowly into frame.

NORIFUMI ABE.

Japanese MotoGP legend.

Long black hair spilling from beneath the helmet like someone out of an impossibly cool anime film. Leather jacket. Lucky Strike dangling from his mouth like it’s still 1994.

For a moment he almost doesn’t feel real. Just another paddock ghost returning after dark.

He kills the engine. Smoke hangs around him.

NORI
Mind if I join?

KEVIN
Do we have a choice?

Nori grins.

NORI
Not really.

KEVIN
I was having a peaceful evening till Suzuka ‘94 showed up again.

NORI
You are welcome for the victory.

KEVIN
Damn right. Happiest I ever was seeing somebody throw away a home Grand Prix lead.

NORI
I was eighteen.

KEVIN
Exactly. Terrifying age.

Nori lights another Lucky Strike off the first one.

JORGE
You are both terrible influences.

NORI
That is why people remember us.

Kevin laughs.

Nori grabs a beer from the cooler without asking.

KEVIN
You staying in Italy a few days?

JORGE
Back to Mallorca.

KEVIN
Fish are better in Idaho.

JORGE
Come on. I have a very private place in Mallorca.

Kevin looks over.

JORGE
Good fishing. Few people. Great food.

KEVIN
Snake River.

JORGE
Mediterranean.

KEVIN
You can’t trout fish in the Mediterranean.

JORGE
You can if you are terrible at fishing.

NORI
Or Japanese.

Kevin laughs.

KEVIN
Fair.

JORGE
And Mallorca has better wine.

KEVIN
Yeah, but Idaho’s got fewer people.

JORGE
That is because it is Idaho.

Kevin smiles.

KEVIN
Exactly.

Smoke. Sunset. Beer. Lucky Strike ember glowing in the dark.

Three riders suspended somewhere between memory and mythology.

Still arguing.

Still riders.

JORGE
All cats are grey.

Kevin watches Xavi and Penelope disappear into the distance.

A beat.

NORI
You still in touch with Rainey?

KEVIN
Wayne?

A beat.

KEVIN
I think we’re still friends.

Nori smirks.

NORI
You always had issues with Kenny Roberts.

KEVIN
He could be a real asshole.

NORI
He was a good boss.

KEVIN
Sure he was.

A beat.

KEVIN
Mean son of a bitch.

The three riders sit there quietly now. Smoke drifting upward into dusk.

A strange stillness. Somewhere between memory and afterlife.

KEVIN
Hell of a rider though.

FADE TO BLACK.

END CREDITS ROLL.

EASTER EGG — GRID KIDZ

EXT. EL BORN — BARCELONA — AFTERNOON — ANIMATED

Barcelona. Vivid, anime-inspired animation. Warm Mediterranean sunlight washes over Gothic stone, balconies, cafés and narrow cobblestone streets.

Animated PENELOPE and XAVI walk through El Born. Recognizably themselves, but reimagined in the colorful world of GRID KIDZ.

PENELOPE
So, I've been talking with a Barcelona animation company. They've got an idea for a series.

XAVI
About motorcycles?

PENELOPE
Not exactly. Neighborhood kids, scooters, mysteries, adventures. MotoGP is just part of their world.

XAVI
And where do I come in?

PENELOPE
They'd love you as a promotional partner. Maybe executive producer. We could both be involved.

XAVI
Executive producer? What would I do?

PENELOPE
For once? Have some fun.

Xavi smiles.

XAVI
How did this come about?

PENELOPE
Well, one of the animators grew up on Mallorca. Apparently there were all these urban legends about a kid, Lio Vega's son, tearing around Palma on a scooter, raising hell.

Xavi bursts out laughing.

XAVI
Urban legends?

PENELOPE
Apparently.

She smiles. They approach a small café. Through its windows, a group of animated kids huddle around a table, deep in conversation.

PENELOPE
Look.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL CAFÉ – EL BORN – AFTERNOON – ANIMATED

LUCAS
What do you mean a helmet was stolen?

SOFIA
Not ***a*** helmet...Diego Alonso's helmet.

Everyone freezes.

MATEO
...You're kidding.

SOFIA
Brand new paint job. Custo Barcelona.

Gone.

EMMA
Does Diego know?

SOFIA
...That's kinda why everyone is screaming.

A beat.

INSERT — CAFÉ WINDOW

Reflected in the glass, animated Penelope and Xavi watch the kids. Xavi is smiling ear to ear.

BACK TO SCENE.

LUCAS
We should probably do something.

MATEO
Absolutely not.

Everyone looks at him.

MATEO
...Which means we're definitely doing something. And fast!

Beat. Extreme close up on Sofia.

SOFIA
We're gonna need bigger scooters.

SMASH TO BLACK.

GRID KIDZ

END.


GRID KIDZ
EL BORN BARCELONA
EL BORN
TAPES
VINS
NATURALS
MÚSICA
CULTURA
JAX
THE DRIVER
Fast, curious, always a plan.
MIA
THE TECH
Builds, hacks, fixes, finds a way.
LUCA
THE DOCUMENTARIAN
Sees the bigger picture.
ZOE
THE WILDCARD
Fearless, creative, no filter.
ARJUN
THE ANALYST
Stats, strategy, knows the sport.